

**JOURNAL OF THE SENATE**  
**ONE HUNDRED FIRST GENERAL ASSEMBLY**  
**OF THE**  
**STATE OF MISSOURI**  
**FIRST REGULAR SESSION**  
**FIRST DAY—WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 6, 2021**

Opening Address

Senator Dave Schatz, President Pro Tem

First Regular Session, 101st General Assembly

January 6, 2021

My fellow Senators, Lt. Governor Kehoe, Justices Draper and Fischer, families and guests: welcome. I am humbled to stand before you today as we begin the 101st General Assembly.

When Democratic Governor Frederick Gardner left office in 1921, he said,

“I think it is no exaggeration to say that the last four years have been the most eventful in the history of civilization. The whole world has been turned upside down.”

He went on to say, “The task of a public official during these years has been a trying one. At times, it has been heart-rending, because one felt so unequal to what appeared to be superhuman demands and expectancy.”

In 2021, one hundred years later, we face the same monumental hurdles: a global pandemic has taken hundreds of thousands of lives and sewn uncertainty like none of us have ever seen. Rapid changes continue to ripple throughout our society and economy. Life is difficult, families are struggling—to put it bluntly, Missourians are exhausted.

And just as the Republicans in 1921 had done, my Republican colleagues and I are riding a wave of electoral victories across the state. Yet in his inaugural address, Missouri’s newly elected Republican Governor Arthur Hyde skipped the typical pomp and self-congratulations—recognizing instead that this “...is a time for self-appraisal, for recognition of our solemn duties and responsibilities.”

One hundred years ago Missourians heeded the call. They took serious action together, and overcame seemingly insurmountable obstacles.

They overhauled their schools—leaving behind the one-room schoolhouses of the past and investing in the modern tools to educate and empower a new century of Missourians.

They reorganized state government—eliminating inefficiencies, removing stifling bureaucratic hurdles, and shining a light on all-too-common political patronage and corruption.

And they undertook the most ambitious infrastructure program in state history—opening up rural communities, creating opportunity, and unshackling the state’s economy by laying out thousands of miles of new roads, highways, and bridges.

As we begin the 101st General Assembly, we can be hopeful the worst is behind us. But make no mistake—there will be difficult challenges ahead as we work to recover, restore, and rebuild.

Many of you are here having just fought through tough elections. You made promises to your constituents.

Missourians are counting on us to honestly and seriously confront the issues facing our schools, public safety, infrastructure, and economy. It’s time for us to lead and deliver.

Just as we pause to reflect on the obstacles overcome in this chamber a century ago, I hope future Missourians will look back at the work we began today—and see serious, solemn leaders who came together, with purpose, to chart a path towards a safer, more prosperous, more resilient Missouri.

I believe we are capable of making that future a reality—and I am eager to work together with all of you to make it happen.

Thank you all, and God Bless the great state of Missouri.